

Message Text

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15

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7291

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PE

SUBJECT: MINERS RETURN TO WORK

REF: LIMA 8614

1. REPRESENTATIVES OF TWELVE UNIONS AT THE CENTROMIN MINE COMPLEX VOTED TO END THEIR SIX-DAY WALKOUT, AND OVER 12,000 MINERS AND METALWORKERS RETURNED TO THEIR JOBS OCTOBER 20. UNIONS HAD REJECTED EARLIER SETTLEMENT ANNOUNCED BY GOP (WITHOUT UNION CONCURRENCE) AND THE EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION WITH "FINAL" GOVERNMENT-DECREED SETTLEMENT WHICH HELD FIRM ON WAGE CEILING BUT APROPOSED LARGE INCREASES IN VACATION AND OTHER BENEFITS (REFTEL). UNION AGREEMENT TO RETURN TO WORK BASED ON FINAL SETTLEMENT PLUS GOP COMMITMENT TO STUDY AND IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS IN ACCORD WITH UNION CONTRACT DEMANDS.

2. COMMENT: SETTLEMENT OF CENTROMIN STRIKE AVOIDS FOR NOW POSSIBILITY OF SERIOUS CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOP AND FAR LEFT MINE UNIONS. TOP GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND PRESS HAVE BEEN CHARGING THAT CENTROMIN STRIKE POLITICAL IN MOTIVATION AND THAT UNION LEADERS WORKING WITH LEFTIST EXTREMIST ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING BANDERA ROJA AND PATRIA ROJA, WHICH SAID TO BE INVITING

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GOVERNMENT REPRESSION. NOW THAT STRIKE SETTLED, GOP MINIMIZING

POLITICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT AND MINE WORKERS. THEN LABOR MINISTER POGGI DECLARED OCTOBER 19 THAT HE NO LONGER SURE WHETHER CENTROMIN STRIKE CAUSED BY POLITICAL AGITATION. MAJOR PROBLEM, POGGI, WAS COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTY BETWEEN GOP AND MINERS.

3. SETTLEMENT WAS COSTLY, PERHAPS AS MUCH AS U.S. \$22,000,000. MINES ONCE AGAIN IN OPERATION BUT FAVORABLE EFFECTS ON CENTROMIN OF RECENT DEVALUATION NOW WIPE OUT. ALSO, IF FAR LEFT UNIONS AS WELL ENTRENCHED AS THEY APPEAR TO BE, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT CENTROMIN WILL EXPERIENCE A YEAR OF LABOR PEACE. OPEN-ENDED GOP AGREEMENT TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS COULD BE NEXT SOURCE OF LABOR AGITATION.
DEAN

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